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Periodic roadworthiness tests for motor vehicles and their trailers, as well as technical roadside inspection of commercial vehicles

Executive Summary

About the draft:

The Commission's proposal aims to improve the quality of roadworthiness testing of motor vehicles in the EU in order to increase road safety and reduce the environmental impact of vehicles in terms of noise and air pollution. It provides for a comprehensive list of measures for passenger cars, light and heavy commercial vehicles and motorcycles to be carried out during periodic roadworthiness tests (in Austria, "57a inspection") and roadside technical inspections. Member States will also be required to record test and inspection data digitally and ensure cross-border data exchange between authorities.

Key points:

- The proposal is an important step towards more effective compliance with existing regulations and technical standards and should therefore be actively supported.
- Digitalisation, increased truck inspection density and emissions testing are welcomed.
- Digitalisation must give consumers access to vehicle data.

AK's Position

On the key provisions of the planned draft:

AK welcomes the proposal as an important step towards more effective compliance with existing regulations and technical standards. In particular, the availability of digital databases has the potential to facilitate control procedures and make them more targeted. Many measures in the passenger car sector, especially those aimed at combating odometer manipulation, are also welcomed from a consumer policy perspective. However, AK believes there is room for improvement in the availability and accessibility of vehicle data such as accident data or information on major repairs, which should be accessible when purchasing a used car. With regard to heavy commercial vehicles, the proposal sets ambitious control requirements for technical roadside checks. This can contribute to fair competition. As two-thirds of all heavy commercial vehicles on Austria's motorways do not have Austrian number plates, the proposal should be actively supported.

Digitalisation and cross-border data exchange

The proposal provides for the introduction of a digital certificate for periodic roadworthiness tests as a standard format (Article 1(7)). Vehicle owners will have the option of requesting a printed test certificate. In addition, a test certificate valid for six months can be obtained in a country other than the country of registration. Digital odometer readings will also be introduced, which will be recorded during official inspections and repairs in workshops.

As Austria is one of the last EU countries without digital test certificates, AK welcomes these changes. From a consumer policy perspective, in addition to digital mileage readings, major accident damage must also be recorded digitally by workshops so that reliable vehicle data is available and can be accessed when purchasing a used car.

Regular vehicle inspections

The minimum requirements for periodic vehicle inspections include new test specifications for electric and hybrid vehicles and new emission tests to measure ultra-fine particle and nitrogen oxide emissions from petrol and diesel vehicles. In addition, tests of electronic

safety systems using the vehicle's electronic interface are planned.

AK welcomes the measurement of ultra-fine particles in diesel and petrol cars, as already practised in Germany and Switzerland. Periodic measurement checks using state-of-the-art equipment can make a significant contribution to compliance with the new EU limits for healthy ambient air from 1 January 2030. Studies have shown that a small percentage of the vehicle fleet ("high emitters") accounts for the majority of emissions.

Technical roadside checks

Under this proposal, Member States must make it mandatory to check the load security of heavy goods vehicles during roadside technical inspections. The overall target is to achieve an inspection rate of five per cent of all trucks registered in the EU per year. Member States must contribute to this target proportionately.

AK welcomes the proposed inspection rate. From the perspective of a Member State plagued by transit traffic, this ambitious inspection rate should be actively supported. With regard to cargo securing, it is also required that trucks be loaded in such a way that they can be inspected without effort by control authorities.

Remote measurements

Under Article 2(5), Member States are required to check the noise and exhaust emissions of a large proportion of their vehicle fleets by means of remote measurement in order to identify vehicles (of all vehicle classes) with potentially high emissions. In accordance with paragraph 3, Member States must check the emissions of these vehicles either during a roadside technical inspection or by requiring the owner or keeper of the vehicle to present it at a testing centre. The frequency of checks must cover at least 30 per cent of the vehicle fleet registered in their territory.

From AK's point of view, remote measurements should give priority to exhaust emissions from trucks. Modern trucks have their own exhaust emission monitoring systems that can be switched off by freight carriers. Roadside checks should therefore focus on pre-selection by remote measurement or so-called "plume chasing

car". Suspicious vehicles should then be checked more thoroughly using existing testing equipment. With the current state of technology, legally binding penalties cannot be imposed on the basis of nitrogen oxide emission values, but only by determining whether the exhaust gas technology has been disabled using special software. In the case of particulate matter emissions, a quick test can be used to check the functionality of the particulate filter.

Noise level measurements should detect vehicles and motorcycles that exceed the average value by more than 3 decibels. From the authorities' point of view, the focus here should be on car tuning and posing, i.e. drivers deliberately and unnecessarily causing noise in urban areas through loud acceleration, braking or revving the engine while idling. The ambitious monitoring density should be achievable with mobile surveillance systems.

Sanctions

Sanctions will be introduced for obvious tampering with vehicle components, including exhaust after-treatment and safety systems. From AK's point of view, these should not only be proportionate, dissuasive and non-discriminatory, but should also have a general preventive effect on transport companies and be based on the company's turnover.



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About us

The Austrian Federal Chamber of Labour (AK) is the legal body which represents the interests of approximately 4 million employees and consumers in Austria. It represents its members on all social, educational, economic and consumer policy-related issues at national level and at EU level in Brussels. Furthermore, the Austrian Federal Chamber of Labour is a part of the Austrian social partnership. The Austrian Federal Chamber of Labour is registered at the EU Transparency Register under the number 23869471911-54.

The main objectives of the 1991 established AK EUROPA Office in Brussels are the representation of AK vis-à-vis the European Institutions and interest groups, the monitoring of EU policies and to transfer relevant information from Brussels to Austria, as well as to lobby the in Austria developed expertise and positions of the Austrian Federal Chamber of Labour in Brussels.